

# Early Literacy and Phonological Awareness:

## Necessary Partners

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# Foundations of Literacy

- Oral language development
- Concepts about print
- Alphabet knowledge
- Phonological awareness
- Letter-sound correspondence
- Beginning reading vocabulary

# Oral Language Development

- To read effectively, children need to be able to express and understand ideas fully
  - stories have events that occur in sequence
  - stories have characters
  - be able to respond to questions
  - be able to ask questions to clarify what is not understood
- What to do?
  - Read aloud!
  - Record language experience stories.
  - Engage in shared book experiences
  - Tell stories from wordless picture books



My fish goes swimming in the  
swimming pool. He got stuck in  
the thing that sucks all the yucky  
stuff out and he couldn't get out.  
He tried to swim out but he was  
stuck in there. He finally got out.  
He swam.

Milo 8-29-05

It's swimming in the fish tank.  
He gets mad 'cause he needs  
fish food. He tries to open the  
top of the tank. He swims out  
into the sink. He gets inside the  
drain, goes down the drain to  
the water plant and stays there.

Claire 8-29-05

What is your favorite sea animal?



My favorite sea animal is a jellyfish.



Re Chant

pie,  
have some  
gonna cry  
green grass  
ky  
way  
pe

See Thank You





"This is my forest,"  
said the bear.



"This is my forest,"  
said the raccoon.

# Concepts About Print

- An understanding of how print works is crucial to reading
  - print conveys meaning, not pictures
  - print is tracked from left to right and top to bottom
    - read big books and ask children “what is read”
    - read big books and ask children “where do I start” and “where do I go next?”
  - words are separated by spaces
    - point out words as you read them
- What to do?
  - Clap for each word
  - Cut apart a repeated line and put it back together
    - “Be a word” and put the sentence together



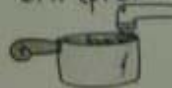
Applesauce Song  
(to the tune of "The Mulberry Bush")

This is the way I cut the **apples**, cut the **apples**,  
cut the **apples**.

This is the way I cut the **apples**.  
Making applesauce.



Now I'll pour the water on, the water on, the water  
on,  
Now I'll pour the water on. (pretend to pour water)  
Making applesauce.



This is the way the **apples** cook, the **apples** cook, the  
**apples** cook.

This is the way the **apples** cook, (pretend to stir)  
Making applesauce.



Now I'll stir the cinnamon in, etc...  
(pretend to sprinkle cinnamon on the children.)

Now I'll stir the **apples** 'round, etc...  
(pretend to stir the children)



Now it's cooked and it can cool, it can cool, it can cool,  
Now it's cooked and it can cool.

I've made my applesauce.



What's tor lunch?

What's for lunch?

What's for lunch?

spaghetti

bread

broccoli

peaches

milk





# Alphabet Knowledge

- Ability to name letters is an excellent predictor of early reading achievement
  - consists of two parts
    - recognizing letters
    - writing letters
  - introduce letter knowledge imbedded within the context of words so children see it meaningfully
- What to do?
  - Read alphabet books
  - Provide words to write in the writing center
  - Provide letter stamps and picture stamps to match
  - Always start with what children know! (Names)

# Learning the Alphabet Puzzle Set

• Includes 26 wooden puzzles •



Made in Taiwan

LA69  
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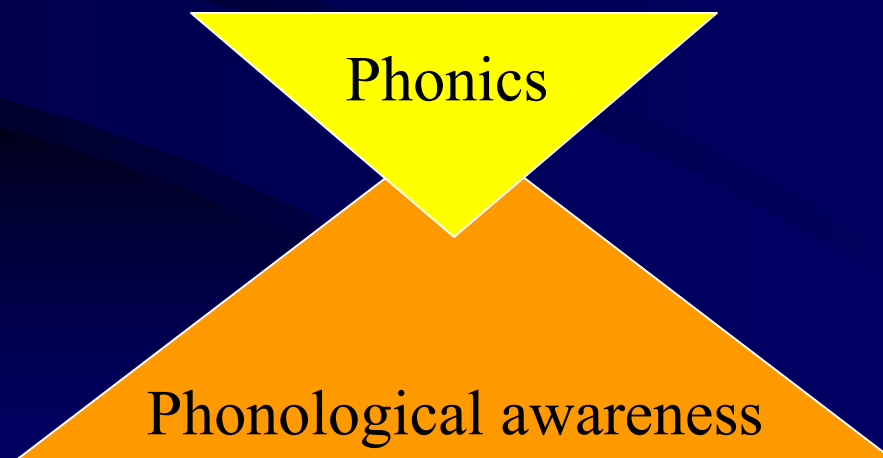
# Phonological Awareness: Getting the *p*-words straight

- *Phonological awareness* refers to the whole spectrum from primitive awareness of speech sounds and rhythms to rhyme awareness and sound similarities and, at the highest level, awareness of syllables or phonemes. *Phonemes* are the smallest units in speech.

- Becoming attentive to the sound structure of language -- becoming phonologically or phonemically aware -- is an “*ear*” skill, unlike *phonics*, which is the relation between letters and sounds in written words.
- One of the best ways to teach letter/sound relations is to draw attention to initial sounds (*onsets*) and word endings (*rimes*).
- Phonological processing is the ability to identify, remember, separate (segment), blend, and manipulate speech sounds.

- Explicit phonics instruction means doing whatever is necessary to teach children all the information and skills they need to learn to read...but doing so appropriately--NO WORKSHEETS
- We are not talking about the bad old phonics of yesteryear, as some think, where teachers turned kids loose with some workbooks!
- By listening at ages 2, 3, and 4, children are beginning to gain experiences with and build organization of written language and its characteristic rhythms and structures.

- The bottom line is that phonological awareness IS NOT PHONICS. It comes before phonics and it supports phonics



# Sequence in Phonological Awareness

- Begins at about three and improves gradually over many years
- Enhancing the development of phonological awareness prior to the start of school is the newest research-supported approach to preventing early reading failure
- What might constitute “enhancing” such development?

# Enhancing Phonological Awareness

- Studies have shown that just 20 minutes three times a week over four months has a dramatic difference in children's awareness.
  - Play rhyming games to call attention to rhyme
    - “One two three, come along to me” What two words rhyme?
  - Offer fun chances for segmentation of morphemes and syllables
    - Can you say only a little bit of “butterfly?” What would butterfly be without the butter?

- Play with categorization of sounds
  - “Which word doesn’t belong: mop, top, pop, can?”
- Play with syllables
  - “Do you hear the doe in window? In doughnut? In candy?”
- Call attention to phonemic contrasts
  - call out words that begin with /b/. Now try /p/.
  - Show 2 pictures with different beginning phonemes, and accentuate the target sound to identify the picture. “/b/, /b/, ball. Which picture begins like /b/, /b/, ball?”
  - Substitute the wrong sound at the beginning of words to make silly words.
  - Use a puppet to play the phonemic sound games

- A typical sequence for this “teaching” is:
  - listening games (listening for environmental sounds)
  - rhyming games
  - segmentation of sentences into words games
  - segmentation of words into syllables games
  - listening for beginning sound likeness games
- Reassess how you are using your circle time--a small portion (10 minutes/day) is all it takes. Make it a daily routine and make it playful!
- Make sure there are center games that allow additional play with sounds!





# The Apple Tree

(finger play)

Way up high

in the apple tree

(point up)

Two little apples

smiled at me

(close thumb + forefinger of each hand, "nod" up and down)



I shook that tree



as hard as I could

(grab imaginary tree and shake it.)

Down fell the apples!

(raise hands high, then let fall)

M-m-m, were they

good!

(rub tummy)



# Letter-Sound Awareness

- Most important in emergent literacy is knowledge about beginning sounds
- What to do?
  - Show a letter and move to it: /b/ bounce and say /b/ or “bounce” every time you bounce--think of movements for every letter! Make this a part of regroup time after centers
  - Use those rubber stamps again
  - Provide magnetic letters
  - Provide a letter/sound board for children to sort pictures by matching sound and corresponding letter

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# ALPHABET SOUNDS

## Photo Library

300 cards with  
familiar images  
from A to Z!



Photo cards measure 5 3/4" x 4 1/2"







# Beginning Reading Vocabulary

- The earliest words children read come from their environment
  - environmental print
    - store names
    - road signs
  - early “sight” words can be drawn from environmental print the child recognizes
- What to do?
  - Bring in labels and read and display them
  - Enrich home living with logos and more labels
  - Read print everywhere you go
  - Label the room meaningfully





# At-Risk for Reading Difficulties

- Those with parents who also had trouble with early language and/or reading
- Those with low letter knowledge
- Those with low phonological awareness
- Those with underdeveloped language skills
- Those with limited familiarity with books

# A Parting Thought.....

- “Young children delight in silliness, alliteration, rhymes, repetitive refrains, nonsense words. Language is there for them to bend, change, tip over, turn inside-out, invent, take apart, put together, and own. Early delight in wordplay augurs later delight in reading.” WORDS FAIL ME by Priscilla Vail